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Thomson - Winter - 1900

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THOMSON'S WINTER,

BEING A REPRODUCTION OF THE

FIRST EDITION,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY WILLIAM WILLIS, Q.C., B.A., LL.D.

LONDON:

W. H. BARTLETT & Co.,

9, SALISBURY SQUARE, FLEET STREET.

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INTRODUCTION.

At the close of Dr. Johnson's 'Life of Thomson,' there are a few sentences, the full meaning of which can scarcely be realized by a reader of the present day, unless he has devoted a considerable time to the study of the early editions of 'The Seasons.' "These poems," says Dr. Johnson, "with which I was acquainted at their first appearance, I have since found altered and enlarged by subsequent revisals, as the author supposed his judgment to grow more exact, and as books or conversation extended his knowledge and opened his prospects. They are, I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not lost part of what Temple calls their *race;* a word which, applied to wines, in its primitive sense, means the flavour of the soil." Mr. Logie Robertson has justly said that the changes which Thomson made in the text of the Seasons, especially in the later editions, were very numerous. "Here he introduced, there he struck out; this he condensed, that he expanded; he was never done substituting a new word or phrase for an old one, and he carried his passion for correcting, or rather for altering, so far as to shift whole passages from one Season to another." An instance of this 'passion' for altering, and one which has led Mr. Logie Robertson into a slight inaccuracy, may be seen in the Poet's treatment of Algernon Sidney. In the editions of 'The Seasons' of 1744, 1746, Algernon Sidney, in the list of Britain's Sons of Glory given in 'Summer,' is styled the 'British Cassius.' Not finding 'the British Cassius' in the previous editions, Mr. Robertson states that Algernon Sidney does not appear in the list of 'British Worthies' until *after* the edition of 1738. This statement is not correct. Algernon Sidney appears in the edition of 1730 and in the edition of 1738. In these editions, however, he is styled 'The British Brutus.'

In order to show, to some extent, the many alterations in, and many additions to, the Original Text of 'The Seasons,' it may at once be stated that the original text of the Four Seasons consisted of three thousand nine hundred and two lines. The edition of 'The Seasons' published in 1746, two years before the Poet's death and the last that received his revision, consists of five thousand four hundred and twenty-three lines. It should be remembered that in making this comparison, the text of the Quarto Edition of 1730, published by subscription, does not represent the Original Text of 'The Seasons,' with the exception of 'Autumn.' 'Autumn' appeared for the first time in the Subscription Volume and constitutes its original text. I think the Earl of Buchan, Mr. Robertson, and Mr. Tovey, the editor of the last Aldine Edition of the Poet's works, have regarded the text of the Subscription Volume 1730 as representing the original Text of all 'The Seasons.' Although aware of the Editions earlier than 1730, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Tovey do not seem to me to have studied or become in any degree acquainted with their text. If they have, some inaccuracies observable in their editions must be due to considerable want of care. The Subscription Volume contains four hundred and forty-one lines more than the original texts of 'Winter,' 'Summer,' and 'Spring.' In the preparation of the Subscription Volume, many lines of the original text were omitted. The first edition of 'Winter,' which was published in March, 1726, contained only four hundred and five lines; in the Subscription Volume, 'Winter' contains seven hundred and eighty-one. The value of the first edition of 'Winter' will be more fully appreciated, when it is known, that nearly one-third of the original text is not found in the text of 'Winter' in the Subscription Volume. The first edition of 'Summer,' which appeared in 1727, contained eleven hundred and forty-six lines; in the Subscription Volume, 'Summer' contains twelve hundred and six lines, one hundred and forty lines of the first edition being omitted, and two hundred new lines added. The first edition of 'Spring,' which was published in 1728, contained ten hundred and eighty-two lines; in the Subscription Volume, 'Spring' contains ten hundred and eighty-seven. This addition of five lines is the result of many omissions and additions. 'The Hymn,' which is found in all Modern Editions at the end of 'Winter,' first appeared

in the Subscription Volume, and consisted of one hundred and twenty-one lines. In the edition of 1746 it numbers only one hundred and eighteen. The principal additions, which are found in the edition of 1746, first appeared in the edition of 1744. The variations of the editions of 1744 and 1746 are very slight. The difference between the number of lines of 'The Seasons' in the Subscription Volume and the edition of 1746 is a thousand and eighty lines. In examining this statement, the reader must be careful to make for himself, an independent addition of the lines in the Subscription Volume. The Earl of Buchan apparently not having done this, and taking the figures in the Subscription Volume to be correct, has stated the lines added to 'The Seasons' after that edition, as nine hundred and sixty-eight. The Subscription Volume gives the lines of 'Winter,' contained in that edition, as eight hundred and eighty-one; the correct number is seven hundred and eighty-one; 'Summer,' twelve hundred and five, should be twelve hundred and six; 'Autumn,' twelve hundred and seventy-five, should be twelve hundred and sixty-nine. The Subscription Volume does not contain the name of any printer or publisher, and was published apparently for Thomson's own benefit. Mr. Bell, in his edition of the Poet's Works, says it was published by Millar. At the time of its publication Millan had the copyright in 'Winter,' 'Summer,' 'Autumn,' and the 'Hymn,' and Millar the copyright in 'Spring.' Mr. Bayne, in his life of Thomson, says that the Subscription Volume was dedicated to Speaker Onslow. 'Autumn' only was inscribed to him. Mr. Seccombe, in his life of Thomson in the "National Dictionary of Biography," says that "to the Subscription Volume was appended a patriotic Poem of considerable length, which had passed through two editions during 1729, 'Britannia a Poem.'" Mr. Seccombe, although supported by M. Morel, is, I think, in error. This poem was not appended to the Subscription Volume. In the proposals for printing 'The Seasons' by subscription, it is said "to which will be added a Poem sacred to the memory of Sir Isaac Newton." Nothing is said of 'Britannia' being added. I have two copies of the Subscription Volume, in neither of which is 'Britannia' found. There is, moreover, Millan's express statement to the contrary. Millan published 'Lyttleton's Persian Letters,' and in the third edition of this work, published in 1735, I find, at the end of

it, a list of Books printed for J. Millan, near the Admiralty Office. I give the following extract: "3. Thomson's Four Seasons and other Poems, printed upon a fine Royal Paper in 4to. N.B. Britania is now added *more than was to the Subscribers' Books.*" I do not think Mr. Seccombe is correct in saying that two editions of 'Britannia' appeared in 1729. When the Subscription Volume was being published, Millan brought out an edition of 'Britannia' in Quarto, in order, apparently, to allow the subscribers, if they thought fit, to add 'Britannia' to the Subscription Volume. This edition of 'Britannia' in quarto (printed for Millan, price one shilling) is entitled the *second* Edition, under date of 1730, and is sometimes found bound up with the Subscription Volume. In the same year, appeared the third edition of 'Britannia' in Octavo.

'Spring' continued to appear under the name of Millar, and 'Summer,' 'Autumn,' 'Winter,' and the 'Hymn' under the name of Millan. Millar and Millan, doubtless, co-operated in the publication and sale of the separate editions. I am not aware that Millar and Millan ever became partners, as Mr. Bayne says they did. On the 16th June, 1738, Millan assigned his copyright in 'Summer,' 'Autumn,' and 'Winter,' the 'Hymn,' the 'Poem to Newton,' and 'Britannia' to Millar. I do not think the sale of the separate editions of 'The Seasons,' with the exception of 'Winter,' was very rapid. After the Subscription Volume was delivered to the subscribers, Octavo volumes were published, having a title page bearing the joint names of Millar and Millan. Each 'Season' had its separate paging, and separate title page, the name of Millar or Millan appearing, according as the copyright was vested in one or the other. In 1730 and onwards 'Winter,' the 'Hymn,' and 'Poem to Newton,' were printed together, with continuous paging, and always under the name of Millan. After the Subscription Volume 'Autumn' appeared in Octavo form, published by Millan, entitled second edition, under date 1730, the first edition, I assume, being that which appeared in the Subscription Volume. How Mr. Bell came to deny that 'Autumn' was published by Millan I cannot understand. I have nine or ten copies of 'Autumn' published by Millan, and in my search for various editions I have never seen a separate edition of 'Autumn' under the name of any other publisher. Until 1738, I cannot find any later edition of 'Autumn' than the second, 1730.

It was published at the price of eighteen pence. Mr. Seccombe says it was published at a shilling. I remember that great judge, Sir James Shaw Willes, saying to counsel, "The evidence to which you are referring is quite irrelevant to the issue we have to try. But if you *must* quote it, at least quote it correctly." So I would say to Mr. Seccombe, if it is necessary to state, in a Dictionary of Biography, the price of a book, please state it correctly. I have not, prior to 1738, met with a later edition of 'Spring' than one dated 1731, entitled the second edition, containing ten hundred and eighty-seven lines. In a volume appearing in 1735, entitled the "Four Seasons" and other poems, and said to be printed for Millan and Millar, 'Spring' is a copy of the first edition, 1728. In 1730, I find a separate edition of 'Summer,' entitled the third edition, with additions, printed and published after the Subscription Volume. In 1735, there appeared the fourth separate edition of 'Summer, published by Millan, bound up with the second edition of 'Spring,' 1731; the second edition of 'Autumn,' 1730, and a separate edition of 'Winter,' the 'Hymn,' 'Poem to Newton,' and 'Britannia,' under date of 1734. These last have a continuous paging, and were, doubtless, printed together.

Separate editions of 'The Seasons' continued to be sold down to the year 1738. In that year, two Octavo volumes appeared, entitled 'The Works of Mr. Thomson,' printed for A. Millar, who, by this time, had acquired the copyright in the whole of 'The Seasons.' Millan had parted with his interest therein. After 1738 a separate edition of any of 'The Seasons,' except as a school edition, is rarely met with. It is sometimes said that Thomson paid only a slight attention to 'The Seasons' between 1730 and 1738. The fact is, he paid none. If the Subscription Volume be compared with the edition of 1738, they will be found exactly alike, with the exception of six additional lines in 'Winter' in the edition of 1738; these six lines were not written by Thomson between 1730 and 1738 and are not new lines. They appeared for the first time in the second edition of 'Winter,' 1726. Mr. Logie Robertson has, with great taste and judgment, if I may be permitted to say so, called attention to the chief Beauties of 'The Seasons'; among others, to the lines in 'Winter' describing the visit of the redbreast. The description

occupies ten lines in the second and third editions of 'Winter,' and as I conjecture in the other separate editions of that Poem prior to 1730. In the Subscription Volume only four lines of this description are taken; and six lines, perhaps the most beautiful portion, are omitted. I cannot state why these six lines were omitted from the Subscription Volume. Whatever be the reason, in the sixth Octavo separate edition of the 'Winter,' published in the same year as, and after, the Subscription Volume, the whole ten lines appear. Thus 'Winter' in 1730 appears in 787 lines—the very same number as in the edition of 1738. It may, I think, be confidently stated that between 1730 and 1738 not a line was added to or an alteration made by the Poet in the text of 'The Seasons.'

During that time, Thomson was fully engaged, and his thoughts were employed, on other subjects. Towards the close of the year 1730, he left England as the travelling companion of Mr. Charles Richard Talbot, the eldest son of the Solicitor-General, Mr. Charles Talbot, who became Lord Chancellor of England, in November, 1733. Mr. Charles Richard Talbot is often spoken of in the Biographies of Thomson as the Honourable Charles Richard Talbot. He never was 'the Honourable,' as he died before his father became a Peer. Sometimes he is spoken of, by Mr. Logie Robertson, Sir Harris Nicolas, and others, as the son of Sir Charles Talbot. His father, although Solicitor-General, "escaped knighthood," to use Lord Campbell's phrase, and continued Mr. Talbot until he received the Great Seal.

Thomson stayed abroad, spending a considerable time in Paris and in Rome, until the close of the year 1731. Mr. Bayne says he returned at Christmas, 1732. On his return he spent nearly three years in composing and preparing for the Press, his great work in Blank verse, entitled "Liberty." It appeared in five parts; the first part appeared (according to Sir Harris Nicolas, on December 27th, 1734) in 1735, with a dedication to Frederick Prince of Wales; the date on the title-page is 1735. The second part appeared in 1735, with the contents of Part one and two. The third part appeared at the close of 1735; the fourth and fifth parts in 1736. Mr. Bayne says "that 'Liberty,' if not a literary success, was *followed* by an exceptional stroke of

financial fortune to Thomson. In 1735 Talbot, now Lord Chancellor, appointed him Secretary of Briefs." Thomson had been in possession of that office twelve months, when the first part of 'Liberty' appeared. Lord Talbot died February 14th, 1737, and Thomson commemorated his great virtues in some noble lines, 371 in number, which appeared in June of that year. He was in the meantime writing and preparing for publication his play of 'Agamemnon,' which appeared in 1738, after having had a run of a few nights upon the stage. In the same year, Millar published anonymously, a translation from the Latin of Milton's letter against the Spaniards, written in 1655, and appended thereto is Thomson's 'Britannia.' M. Morel gives 1733 as the year of this publication. Some think that Thomson was the translator. In this same year 1738, not 1740, as Mr. Logie Robertson states, appeared a reprint of Milton's speech for the 'Liberty of Unlicensed Printing,' with a characteristic 'Preface by another Hand.' This Hand is known to be Thomson. "Can truth," he asks, "be better armed against error than with the mighty blade of uncontrouled Reason?"

The next edition of 'The Seasons,' after 1738, is that of 1744. It is in this edition that the great mass of the variations and additions is found. He is in love, and the lines to Amanda, Miss Young, are introduced. He has read extensively, and adds to the list of British Worthies, and gives an enlarged description of the qualities of those he had previously selected. He has become acquainted with the Earl of Chesterfield and Mr. Lyttleton. The characters of Chesterfield, Lyttleton and his wife, and a description of the grounds and woods of Hagley, supply materials for enlargement.

Thomson is sometimes spoken of as the friend of Lord Lyttleton, and sometimes, of Sir George Lyttleton. He did not know any such persons. He only knew Mr. Lyttleton. Thomson died August 27th, 1748, at the age of forty-eight, and Mr. Lyttleton did not become Sir George until the death of his father in 1751, nor become Lord Lyttleton until 1757.

The last edition of 'The Seasons,' with some slight alterations and the addition of ten lines in the whole, was published in 1746. This edition is the last that received any alteration at the hands of Thomson, and is the last that was published in his lifetime. The text of this edition, one

would suppose, would be strictly adhered to. It was adhered to, in one or two editions of 'The Seasons,' published soon after Thomson's death; but, strange to say, it was departed from in the splendid edition of the entire Works in two quarto volumes published by Millar, under the editorship of Murdoch. This edition appeared in 1762, and certainly from that time forward, until Longman's famous edition of 'The Seasons' in 1842, edited by that great lover of the Poet, Mr. Bolton Corney, no one for three generations, unless he had the good fortune to possess a copy of the edition of 1746, read 'The Seasons' as Thomson left them. I possess copies of eighty editions of 'The Seasons' between 1762 and 1842 and the text of every one of them is defective. Since 1842 nearly all editors profess to give the text of 1746, and for the most part they have done what they profess. I am sorry to say that in one instance since 1842, under the profession of following the text of 1746, a very defective text has been produced; a text the like of which has not appeared before or since 1746. The text to which I refer is found in the Clarendon Press Edition of 'The Seasons,' edited by Mr. Logie Robertson, 1891. Its editor is a man of taste and learning. The book itself is a gem—the paper, printing and binding are excellent, such as would in appearance delight the soul of the Poet could he see it. On examining its pages, the serious textual errors, it contains, would grieve him.

Mr. Logie Robertson says, in the preface to his edition, that "the text of 'The Seasons' adopted in the present edition is *of course* that of the year 1746." That its errors may not be reproduced in any subsequent edition, I will now set forth the differences between the text of the Clarendon Press edition and the text of the edition of 1746.

In 'Spring,' in line five, for 'O Hertford' *read* 'O Hartford,' in line fourteen for 'ravished' *read* 'ravag'd.' In line 65 for 'greatly independent lived' *read* 'greatly independant scorn'd All the vile Stores Corruption can bestow.' In line 143 for 'cave' *read* 'caves.' In line 158 for 'Aspen' *read* 'Aspin,' and in line 196 for 'landscape' *read* 'landskip.' In line 200 for 'And' *read* 'thee.' In line 235 for 'of life, and health, and joy' *read* 'of health, and life, and joy,' and, in line 255 for 'those' *read* 'these'. In line 358 for 'ye done' *read* 'you done.' In line 369 for 'thus' *read* 'this.' In line 423 for 'Pendent' *read* 'Pendant.' In line

537 for 'Ranunculus' *read* 'Renunculas.' In line 648 for pendent' *read* 'pendant.' In line 845 for 'their golden Heads' *read* 'the golden Head.' In line 1110 for 'flames' *read* 'aims.'

Let me now set forth the differences in 'Summer.'

In line 96 for '!' put '?' In line 383 for 'farthest' *read* 'farther.' In line 497 for 'And there his sceptre-crook and watchful dog' *read* 'there, listening every noise, his watchful dog.' In line 612 for 'smote with' *read* 'smit by.' In line 624 for 'in' *read* 'on.' In line 638 for 'through' *read* 'o'er.' In line 685 for 'anana' *read* 'Anâna.' In line 1195 for 'presaging' *read* 'heavy with.' In line 1232 for 'and nature smiles revived' *read* 'yet dropping from distress.' In line 1338 Poor Damon is made by the Clarendon Press Edition to run with headlong 'fury.' According to Thomson, in his edition of 1746, Damon runs 'with headlong hurry.' In line 1548 for 'who' *read* 'that.' In line 1601 for 'as' *read* 'like.' In line 1683 for 'Lamp' *read* 'gem.' In line 1684 for 'Twinkles a moving gem' *read* 'a moving radiance twinkles.' In lines 1684 and 1685 for 'On evening's heel night follows fast' *read* 'evening yields the world to night.' In line 1717 for 'power' *read* 'powers.'

Let me now examine Mr. Robertson's text of 'Autumn.'

In line 164 for 'stated eye' *read* 'sated eye.' In line 175 for 'how' *read* 'that.' In line 269 for 'his every look, his every feature' *read* 'his every feature, every look.' This line affords a good instance of Thomson's many minute alterations in the editions of 1744 and 1746. In line 338 for 'bank' *read* 'banks.' In line 482 for "echoes" *read* 'echo.' In line 483 for 'snatch' *read* 'scale' and for 'by' *read* 'to.' In line 495 for 'a' *read* 'an.' In line 506 for 'talking' *read* 'and talk.' In line 525 for 'dull' *read* 'grave.' In line 545 for 'every kindred' *read* 'each congenial.' In line 547 for 'go' *read* 'goes.' In line 673 for 'Here' *read* 'And.' In line 690 for 'gravid' *read* 'weighty.' In line 807 for 'behold, the glooms disclose!' *read* 'Behold! the glooms disclose.' In line 897 for 'flight,—a manly race' *read* 'flight. A manly race.' In line 949 for 'known' *read* 'felt.' In line 1003 for 'a' *read* 'the.' In line 1094 for 'us' *read* 'all.' In line 1106 for 'near' *read* 'quite.' In line 1182 for 'tumble' *read* 'tumbles.' In line 1184 for 'ye' *read* 'you.' In line 1185 for 'ye' *read* 'you.'

Let us examine Mr. Robertson's text of 'Winter,' and compare it with the edition of 1746, which he professes to follow.

In line 6 for 'congenial' *read* 'cogenial.' In line 102 for 'away' *read* 'a Way.' In line 117 for 'ye' *read* 'you.' In line 569 for virtue *read* 'virtues.' In line 857 for 'as' *read* 'or.' In line 887 for 'Tornea's' *read* 'Tornêa's.'

One may well hope that Mr. Robertson has been able to give the text of the Hymn as it appears in the edition of 1746, consisting only of 118 lines. In this, his fatal inaccuracy attends him. In line 107 for 'breathes' *read* 'spreads.' The first edition in which I can find 'breathes' is that of Murdoch, 1762. Thomson never used, nor was he likely to use, the word breathes. In nearly all the editions from 1762 to 1842, and in many since, the word 'breathes' is repeated.

Thus can there be found a mass of errors in Mr. Robertson's edition of 'The Seasons,' which professes to give the text of 1746, and without a single indication that any error exists in the text he has given. The text of Mr. Robertson's edition is not the text of any edition, early or late. It is a corrupt text, causing annoyance to the reader, and destructive, to some extent, of the fame of Thomson. Moreover, the spelling of the last edition of 1746 has been departed from. The punctuation is not followed; sometimes brackets are omitted, and some inserted, where none exist in any other text, and the whole page is frequently deformed by the use of hyphens, which cannot be justified by an appeal to any edition.

The publication of the first edition of 'Winter' will enable readers of Thomson to see, that there was not any poetical dedication to Sir Spencer Compton when 'Winter' first appeared, but only a prose dedication. The prose dedication appears in the second and third editions of 'Winter.' It is said there are a fourth and fifth editions of 'Winter' before the appearance of 'Winter' in the Subscription Volume. These separate editions I have not seen; I assume the prose dedication was annexed to each of these, as to the first, second, and third. On the publication of the 'Collected Seasons' in the Subscription Volume, the prose dedication was withdrawn, and the poetical dedication was substituted as, with a few verbal alterations, it now appears in any edition of 'The Seasons.' The reader should remember that between 1726 and 1730 Sir Spencer Compton, who was Speaker of the House of Commons, when

'Winter' was first published, became the Earl of Wilmington. There was a prose dedication to 'Summer' when it first appeared in 1727. On the publication of the Subscription Volume the prose dedication was withdrawn and a poetical dedication substituted. 'Autumn' appeared first, in the 'Collected Seasons,' without any prose dedication and with its present poetical dedication to Speaker Onslow. There is a peculiarity about the dedication of 'Spring' which must be noted. 'Spring' was published in 1728 with both a prose and poetical dedication. Mr. Robertson says very special care has been taken in the preparation of the notes to his edition. He may have taken very special care, but in his notes many errors exist. On p. 242 he says, "The prose dedication of 'Spring' was not repeated. In the second edition appeared the greater compliment of these half-dozen lines at the commencement of the Poem which rendered it [the repetition of the prose dedication] unnecessary." M. Morel says that the prose dedication to the Countess of Hertford was replaced in the second edition by the poetical tribute. I do not think Mr. Robertson and M. Morel can have seen the first edition of 'Spring.' The "greater compliment" appeared in the first edition, and to the first edition of 'Spring' there was both a prose dedication to the Countess of Hertford, and the poetical dedication as it now, in substance, stands in all editions. None of the prose dedications appeared in the Quarto Volume, 1730, nor in any subsequent edition published during Thomson's life. They have been reproduced in a few of the numerous editions of 'The Seasons' which have been printed since his death. Johnson writes of the removal of the prose dedications with a mysterious air, and says, "Why the dedications are, to 'Winter' and the other seasons [he seems to forget or not to know that there was no prose dedication to 'Autumn'] contrarily to custom, left out in the collected works, the reader may inquire." Johnson would, in this passage, seem to intimate that the prose dedications were omitted from the collected works because of the severance, perhaps, of friendships or political ties. They were omitted long before any edition of his collected works appeared, and before he was openly attached to any political party. I do not think their omission was due to any other reason than this; that not intending to dedicate the 'Autumn' in prose, and there being already a

poetical dedication to 'Spring,' he decided that each of 'The Seasons' should have only a poetical dedication. In 1729, a second edition of 'Spring' was published, and in this edition the prose dedication to the Countess of Hertford does not appear, as if the intention to have only poetical dedications to the 'Four Seasons,' in the Subscription Volume, had then been formed. In this edition the reader may find a 'Chapter of Contents,' containing a full analysis of the Poem, and which certainly should be reproduced in any complete edition of Thomson's works. One of the lines of the 'Contents' is curious: "A piece of Houshold-Fowl." This edition, with the exceptions above mentioned, is exactly like the first edition, with the same errata. In the first edition of 'Spring' there are the proposals for printing the whole of the 'Four Seasons' by subscription, with a Hymn on their succession, to which will be added "A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton. An Essay on descriptive Poetry will be prefixed to the whole. Subscriptions are taken in by the Author at the Smyrna Coffee House, Pall Mall, and by A. Ramsay at Edinburgh." When proposals for printing the 'Four Seasons' by subscription were first put forth, Thomson had only published 'Winter' and 'Summer.' On the appearance of "Spring' in a separate edition, 1728, as an excuse for its appearance before the Subscription Volume, Thomson says in an advertisement, "that the following Poem ('Spring') appears at present in Publick is not any way in prejudice of the proposals I lately published for printing the 'Four Seasons' by subscription, but at the solicitation of some of my friends who had seen it in Manuscript and the better to carry on the work I stand engaged to finish. For subscription is now at its last gasp and the world seems to have got the better of that many-headed Monster." One reason, I think, why he published 'Spring' before its appearance in the Subscription Volume was, because he could obtain from Andrew Millar an advance of fifty guineas. Mr. Logie Robertson is most unfortunate in his notes. He says the publisher of 'Spring' was "one Andrew Miller, who did business at the sign of Buchanan's Head and who seems to have favoured or been favoured by Scottish authors." If Mr. Robertson had noticed that the publisher of 'Spring' was 'Millar,' he surely would not have spoken of the most famous bookseller between 1725 and 1760 as 'one Andrew

Miller.' His being a Scotchman may doubtless have had something to do with his publishing the works of Scotchmen. He was, however, the friend and publisher of Fielding, and took a chief part in the publication of Dr. Johnson's Dictionary. Mr. Logie Robertson says, "It was not until 1731 that he (Miller) brought out the second edition, but in the interval, more particularly in 1730, the first edition of the Collected Seasons had appeared." There is no doubt, an edition of 'Spring' was published in 1731, entitled 'Second Edition'; but I have already stated that a second edition of 'Spring' was published by Millar in 1729, with the characteristic 'Chapter of Contents.' It is the same in the text as the first edition, with the very same errata. It may, therefore, be the remainder of the first edition, with a new title-page. In 1731, a separate edition by Millar, styled the 'Second Edition,' was published, which does not differ in any respect from 'Spring' as it appeared in the Subscription Volume, with the exception of a few changes in the spelling, and one or two printer's errors.

I have published the first edition of 'Winter,' partly as a token of my affection for the Poet Thomson, and partly with the view of increasing, if possible, the study, by our young men and women, of the pure and noble writings of Thomson. I have also published it with a view of removing some errors that exist in respect of the Poet's work and life, and of assisting in the detection of some mistakes which have been committed by some of his most recent commentators. Thomas Campbell has said, "Even Thomson's extension of his subject to the whole year seems to have been an afterthought, as he began with the last of the Seasons." Mr. Robertson says that Thomson had not thought of the 'Seasons' when writing 'Winter.' Others have said that Mallett suggested to him the treatment of the whole of the Seasons after he published 'Winter.' The first edition of 'Winter' will show, I think, that before he finished 'Winter' he contemplated a poem on each of the Seasons. In the first edition appear the following lines:—

> Thee too, Inspirer of the toiling Swain!
> Fair Autumn, yellow-rob'd! I'll sing of thee,
> Of thy last temper'd days and sunny calms.

He sang of 'Autumn' last. He began 'Summer' almost

immediately after the publication of 'Winter,' and soon after the appearance of 'Summer' he issued proposals for printing by subscription the 'Four Seasons,' with a hymn on their succession. Whilst he is composing his 'Winter,' in the Autumn of 1725, he writes to Dr. Cranstoun, "I am just now painting Nature in her most lugubrious dress for my own amusement, describing Winter as it presents itself. . . ." After this introduction I say:—

> Nor can I, O, departing Summer! choose
> But consecrate one pitying line to you!
> May your last, temper'd days, and sunny calms
> But cheer the spirit and serene the soul.

Before he has finished the composition of 'Winter,' he says he will sing of fair 'Autumn' and her 'last tempered days and sunny calms,' words which he had already applied to 'Summer.' The reference to 'Summer,' which is found in the lines contained in the letter to Cranstoun, does not appear in 'Winter,' but the resolution to sing of 'Autumn' does. It is clear that before the first edition of 'Winter' appeared he is thinking of three of the Seasons, has written of one ('Winter'), and promises to write of 'Autumn.' I cannot doubt that before 'Winter' appeared he intended to write of 'Summer'; and if he intended to write of three, it it is not an unfair inference that he included 'Spring' within the range of his vision. Almost immediately after the publication of 'Winter,' he writes—"How gay looks the spring! how glorious the summer! how pleasing the autumn! and how venerable the winter! But there is no thinking of these things without breaking out into poetry." He published 'Spring' in 1728, nearly two years before 'Autumn,' which he had, in 1726, expressly promised to commemorate in song. The lines in which he promises to sing of 'Autumn' do not appear after the fifth edition of 'Winter,' certainly not in the Subscription Volume. They are withdrawn in order to allow of the poetical dedication to Compton to appear therein for the first time, and with them, disappear ninety-five continuous lines from the first edition of 'Winter.' No one, unless he looked at an edition earlier than the Collected Edition, 1730, would be aware of Thomson's intention to sing of 'Autumn' prior to the publication of the first edition of 'Winter' in 1726.

In noticing the alterations which Thomson made from time to time in 'The Seasons,' Mr. Peter Cunningham says: "The passage that appeared originally in 'Summer' is now in 'Autumn,' and another, originally in 'Spring,' is now in 'Summer.' But transfers of the kind were not common with him—indeed I have traced no other." Mr. Peter Cunningham could not, I think, have read the first edition of 'Winter'; if he had, he would have stated that a large portion of ninety-five lines appearing in the first edition of 'Winter' was transferred, with some verbal alterations, to 'Autumn.' They are found in the ordinary editions of 'The Seasons' between line 960, and line 1100. Mr. Robertson, although he points out the transfer of lines from one Season to another, and although he has notes on some of these lines, and says that the substance of them has been expressed by the poet in prose, does not refer to the fact that the lines have been transferred from the first edition of 'Winter.'

The reader of the early editions of 'Winter' will discover and avoid many mistakes into which some of the biographers of Thomson and some of the commentators on his works have fallen. Thus Mr. Tovey, one of the latest English biographers of Thomson, has stated 'that Thomson was still young, not twenty-six in fact, when he wrote in his 'Winter' with the quiet irony of Scepticism—

> "Meantime, the village rouses up the fire:
> While, well attested, and as well believed,
> Heard solemn, goes the goblin story round;
> Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all."

Three editions of the 'Winter' appeared in 1726, and Thomson would be twenty-six in September, 1726. In neither of these editions do the four lines above quoted appear. If they appeared in the fourth edition Thomson must have been more than twenty-six years of age. I have not been able to meet with the fourth and fifth editions of 'Winter,' and I believe the lines quoted above did not appear in 'Winter' until it formed part of the collected edition (see lines 515 to 518). Thomson was nearly thirty years of age when he wrote them. Mr. Tovey assumes, I think, that in reading 'Winter' in the 'Quarto Edition,' 1730, he is reading the original text. In the comparison of texts, Mr. Tovey, as far

as I can see, never refers to an earlier edition than the Subscription Volume of 1730.

I think Mr. Robertson has fallen into the same error, or he has not exercised due diligence in the preparation of some of his notes on 'Winter.' In his note on the words 'congenial horrors,' line 6 (Thomson wrote and printed 'cogenial'), Mr. Robertson states that some trace 'the congeniality' to the circumstances of disappointment, loneliness, bereavement, and even poverty, in which Thomson was placed, when he *began* the poem. Mr. Robertson very properly dissents from this view, and says that those who reason thus perhaps 'overlook the fact' that winter time had always been a pleasure to him; it was equally congenial to his cheerful, careless, robust boyhood. Mr. Robertson apparently 'overlooks the fact' that Thomson did not use the words 'cogenial horrors' when he began his poem. These words did not appear in the first and early editions of 'Winter.' They appeared for the first time in the Subscription Volume of 1730, and five years after he *began* his poem of 'Winter.'

The line in the first and early editions stands thus—

> Welcome kindred glooms!
> Wish'd, wintry, Horrors, Hail!

In Mr. Robertson's note on the 'lucid chambers of the south,' line 15, we are referred to the Book of Job. As Mr. Robertson desired to make his readers acquainted with the early editions, he had better told them, that in the first edition of 'Winter' Thomson wrote 'opening,' for which, in the Quarto edition, he substituted, as I think, a weaker and less descriptive word 'lucid.' In the note on lines 41—44, Mr. Robertson says "In *all* editions up to 1738 these lines read—

> When Scorpio gives to Capricorn the sway,
> And fierce Aquarius fouls the inverted year,
> Retiring to the verge of heaven, the sun, etc.

These lines do not appear in the first five editions of 'Winter,' and did not appear before the Quarto Edition of 1730. In the note on line 64, 'fresh from the plough,' Mr. Robertson says, in the earlier edition, 'red from the plough.' These words did not appear until the Subscription Volume, 1730. In note on lines 66—71 Mr. Robertson says these

lines were probably written at Barnet. They were probably written when he had left Barnet three or four years. Mr. Robertson seems quite ignorant or forgetful of the fact that the lines 43 to 72 in the 'Winter' of the Subscription Edition 1730, beginning 'When Scorpio gives,' and ending 'listening Fancy's ear,' are new, and appear there for the first time. Mr. Robertson can scarcely have read the early editions of 'Winter,' or he would not have written these notes. In note on line 113, Mr. Robertson says 'subtile' in the earlier text. In the early editions the word was 'viewless.' In note on line 125 'a wan circle round her blunted horns,' Mr. Robertson says in the earlier text, 'her sullied orb,' instead of 'her blunted horns.' This is the only alteration he can point out, assuming the Quarto text to represent the first text of 'Winter.' He does not notice that in the first edition 'bleak' was used instead of 'wan.' Thomson substituted 'wan' for 'bleak' in the second edition. In the note on lines 153—155 Mr. Robertson says 'In the original text—

> Then issues forth the storm with mad control.'

In the original text it is 'with *loud* control.' 'Mad' was substituted for 'loud' in the second edition. In note on lines 160—163 Mr. Robertson says "originally—that is, in all editions till after 1738—

> Seems, as it sparkles, all around to burn.
> Meantime, whole oceans, heaving both clouds,
> And on broad billows rolling gathered seas."

These lines did not appear in the first five editions of 'Winter.' Their first appearance was in the Quarto Edition, the text of which Mr. Robertson assumes to be the same as the original. In note on line 166 'inflated' Mr. Robertson says in the early text 'hilly.' In note on line 169 'full blown' stood for 'wintry.' These statements are equally inaccurate. His comment on line 175 is also incorrect. Mr. Robertson does not know apparently that the lines he quotes from the Quarto Edition 1730, commencing line 135 and ending 157, are nearly all new, and did not appear in the first five editions. The 'long resounding shore,' which he gives as the earlier text was until the 'Quarto' 'the steril

shore.' Mr. Logie Robertson, so far as I can find, never calls attention to a text different from the 'Quarto' in any earlier edition. Thus the note on line 200, 'commences a calm,' is, see Mark iv. 39. As Mr. Robertson promised to make his readers acquainted with the earlier text, it would have been more to the purpose, instead of a reference to a well-known verse in Mark, to call the reader's attention to the text of the first edition of 'Winter.' In it Thomson wrote thus—

> 'All nature reels. But hark! the *Almighty* speaks,
> Instant, the chidden Storm begins to pant,
> And dies at once into a noiseless Calm.'

In the second edition these lines were changed for those which appear in all modern editions, lines 197—201. I may be permitted to say, by the change, I think the Poem lost somewhat of its '*race*.' In note on line 228, 'And the sky saddens with the gathered storm,' Mr. Robertson calls our attention to the use of '*saddens*' in a line in 'Summer'—but does not tell his readers that in the early editions Thomson wrote 'impending' instead of 'gathered.' 'Gather'd' appeared first in 1730. In note on line 239 'one wild dazzling waste,' Mr. Robertson says that it is a favourite form of phrase, and refers to 'one wide waft,' 'one wide flash,' but does not state that in the early edition Thomson wrote 'is all one dazzling waste.' In note on lines 245—256, Mr. Robertson says that the picture of the Redbreast helping himself to the table crumbs is a charming vignette, but does not tell his readers that it did not appear in the first edition of 'Winter,' but did in the second. In Mr. Robertson's note on lines 947—948, he says in the earlier text (from 1726 to 1738) these lines ran—

> Till long expected morning looks at length,
> Faint on their fields (where Winter reigns alone), etc.

I can speak positively of the first three editions, published in 1726, that no such lines are to be found therein, and I firmly believe that they are a part of eighty lines which appeared for the first time in the Subscription Volume 1730. I have no doubt myself that the fourth and fifth editions are the same as the first three editions published in 1726. I should deem it a favour if any one would tell me where

copies of the fourth and fifth editions of 'Winter' may be seen. In his note on lines 988—990, Mr. Robertson says these three lines stood *originally* down to 1738—

> Muttering, the winds at eve with hoarser Voice
> Blow blustering from the south. The frost subdued
> Gradual resolves into a trickling thaw.

These three lines did not stand originally thus. The original text, found only in the first edition, was as follows:—

> But hark, the nightly Winds, with hollow voice
> Blow, blustering, from the South—the Frost subdued,
> Gradual, resolves into a weeping Thaw.

Mr. Robertson might have called attention to the rare and characteristic expression, 'a weeping thaw.'

These instances, and others could be adduced, lead me to the conclusion that Mr. Robertson in comparing the last edition of 1746 with the earlier texts has assumed that the text of 'Winter' in 1730 represents the original text. As this is not so, his notes are deprived of much of their value, and sometimes are misleading.

The student of Thomson should, if possible, examine the second or third edition of 'Winter.' I have compared them both very carefully, and my examination leads me to the conclusion that they are identical. Mr. Peter Cunningham says the third edition contains 464 lines. I cannot so count them. It is in the second edition, and also in the third, that the reader meets with, in addition to the prose dedication to Sir Spencer Compton, a preface of eleven pages and the lines addressed to Thomson by A. Hill, Mira, and Malloch (*alias* Mallet). These only appear in editions prior to the Subscription Volume. The tendency of Thomson to correct, alter, and add to his writings after their publication, is distinctly seen when either the second or third edition is compared with the first. All the Latin quotations on the title page of the first edition are omitted. The lines in the 'Winter,' first edition, are four hundred and five; in the second or third, the lines are four hundred and sixty-three. The verbal alterations are numerous and minute. Thus, 'wild' is changed into 'huge,' and 'blast' into 'storm.' The opening lines of 'Winter,' with the exception of 'cheerful' being

changed to 'chearful,' continued unchanged until the Quarto Edition, when for the bold delightful expression,

Wish'd, wint'ry, Horrors, Hail!

we have

Cogenial, Horrors, Hail!

'Domains' becomes 'domain'; 'Opening chambers' becomes 'lucid chambers,' a change, which, I think, involves a distinct loss of imagery. Thus the Invocation continued until 1744, when for 'red evening sky' the poet substituted 'grey evening sky.' In the second edition are to be found alterations both in the spelling and in the punctuation.

If one reads the first edition of 'Winter,' a most disgraceful story of Thomson's early life will be at once repelled. It appeared first in the memoir prefixed to Morrison's edition of the 'Seasons,' Perth, 1793. It imputes to the Poet gross misconduct whilst living at Barnet in the Autumn of 1725, when he was writing 'Winter.' The writer of the life in that edition says he does not know whether he read or heard the story, nor does he know the exact time when the poet was living in the family of Lord Binning. The story is, I am sorry to say, re-published in M. Morel's life of the Poet, although little weight is given to it. I should, before accepting such a story, want the most clear and direct evidence of it, and should require it to be told by persons of unblemished character and free from all ill-will or motive for defaming. It is the story of a waiting maid. At the time when he is supposed to be guilty of this gross misconduct, he was writing the lines which first appeared in 'Winter,' 1726—

Father of Light and Life! thou *Good Supreme!*
O! teach me what is Good! teach me thy self!
Save me from Folly, Vanity, and Vice,
From every low Pursuit! and feed my soul,
With knowledge, conscious Peace, and Virtue pure,
Sacred, substantial, never fading Bliss!

These lines enable me to see his love of God and his earnest desire to be like Him.

What injury gossip has done, in the eyes of some, to the Poet Thomson. Gossip has married him to a woman whom none of his intimate friends ever saw or heard of. The gossip

of Savage, whose word I would not take, has made him delight in 'carousing' with Lord Hertford. Thomson may have found occasionally the society of Lord Hertford more pleasant and agreeable than that of the Countess, who only desired the Poet's presence in order that he might assist her in the composition of verses not worth reproducing. See how things grow! 'Delight in carousing' has become, in the hands of Mr. Robertson, 'the scene of *these carousals*,' and the last biographer, Mr. Tovey, turns the gossip into 'Thomson's assisting Lord Hertford *to drink*.' There is not a particle of reliable evidence for any one of these statements. As Thomson wrote the 'Castle of Indolence,' and report says he was himself indolent, men have done nothing but invent stories of his indolence. About fifty years ago an American author stated that Thomson had been *once* seen, with his hands in his pocket, to bite out the sunny side of a peach. Now in course of time—in the "National Dictionary of Biography," forsooth—he is said to have eaten the sunny side off the peaches in his garden, with his hands in his pockets. In the National Dictionary of Biography also, we are told, upon what authority does not appear, that he cut his books with the snuffers, and that, like Cowley, he knew how to push the bottle. What good is there, even if true, in publishing such statements, and particularly in a Dictionary? Johnson tells us, upon the authority of Savage, I suppose, that Thomson's first want in London was a pair of shoes. If this means, he could not procure a pair of shoes when he needed them, the statement is absolutely untrue. He sometimes borrowed to meet expenditure, and sometimes he may have been pressed for payment of debts he had contracted, but that he suffered the pressure of poverty at any time of his life I do not accept, although we are told so by Mr. Robertson. None of these stories are found in Murdoch's life, a very model of a brief and discreet memoir. How well would it have been, if some who profess to be the admirers of the poet Burns had exercised a similar discretion. There are many things in writing the life of a distinguished man which prudence and discrimination will withhold. There is nothing in the life of Thomson which should prevent our having an affectionate regard for him as a man. He enjoyed during his life the loving friendship of many distinguished men, and never lost the love of any one of them.

I cannot close this introduction, without correcting a statement of Mr. Tovey, which is injurious to Murdoch as a biographer. It is well known that Thomson in setting out for London in February, 1725, left by vessel from the port of Leith. His widowed mother saw him off, and there took the last farewell of her affectionate son. She died within six weeks of his departure, although Johnson says she lived to see her son rising into eminence. This statement of Johnson became, in the hands of W. M. Rossetti, 'she lived to see her son a man of celebrity.' In the lines on his mother's death Thomson expressly tells us he remembers the torturing sight:—

> When on the margin of the briny flood,
> Chilled with a sad presaging damp I stood,
> Took the last look, ne'er to behold her more,
> And mixing our murmurs with the wavy roar!
> Heard the last words fall from her pious tongue,
> Then wild into the tossing vessel flung,
> Which soon, too soon, conveyed me from her sight,
> Dearer than life and liberty and light.

In page xvii. of his memoir of Thomson, Mr. Tovey says, "Murdoch, however, expressly says, 'Our author went first to Newcastle by land, where he took shipping and landed at Billingsgate.'" Murdoch says nothing of the sort. It would be strange, if a man, intimate with the facts of the Poet's life, had made a statement so absolutely untrue. The memoir by Murdoch first appeared in 1762; a revised edition of it, with some slight alterations, appeared in 1768. Murdoch died in 1774. I am not aware that Murdoch, after 1768, altered the life in any respect. In the editions of 1762 and 1768, so far from saying that Thomson went to Newcastle by land, there is not even a reference to the way in which the Poet left Scotland. Shiels, almost the first biographer of Thomson, tells us 'he (Thomson) soon set out for Newcastle, where he took shipping and landed at Billingsgate.' Shiels does not expressly say he went by land to Newcastle; his words, however, may seem to imply it. Thomson may have gone by water to Newcastle, and thence by another vessel to London. Where did Mr. Tovey get the statement that Thomson went by *land* to Newcastle? I think he got the statement, not from Murdoch's life, but from a life prefixed to an edition of Thomson's works

in four volumes, printed by J. Robertson, Edinburgh, 1768. A life is prefixed to this edition, but is not said to be by Murdoch, nor could it be. This life was published in the same year as that in which the second edition of the life by Murdoch appeared, and in which the important alteration of the mother's maiden name is found. As neither Murdoch's life nor Shiels' life, perhaps, could be taken bodily and printed, the gentleman who prepared this life took, first, one paragraph from the life by Murdoch and then, one from the life by Shiels, and in this way made up a memoir of Thomson. It is in this memoir, and in this memoir only, which is prefixed to some subsequent editions of Thomson's works, that I find the statement that Thomson went first to Newcastle by land. I feel certain that Murdoch never made or published any such statement. A hundred years ago, Boswell could run half over London to fix a date. An English writer of to-day cannot take the trouble to open a book to see whether, what he is writing, is correct. Whilst accuracy has ceased to be a characteristic of English writers and speakers, it is pleasant to remember that we have in 'James Thomson, sa vie et ses œuvres,' a volume as remarkable for its accuracy as its research. In preparing and publishing this volume M. Morel has raised a monument to the Poet more lasting than marble or brass.

The only copy, so far as I know, of the first edition of 'Winter' is in the British Museum Library. I could not prudently incur the expense of a facsimile reproduction of it. I have given, however, a facsimile reproduction of the title page. I have been able to do this by the permission of the authorities at the British Museum, to whom I am indebted for many acts of kindness. The punctuation of the first edition has been exactly followed. I have retained the errata. The first edition is remarkable for the use of italics. All words in italics in the first edition are in italics in the present. The paragraphs, into which the first edition and the reproduction are broken, are exactly the same. Almost every substantive in the first edition begins with a capital letter, and the first word of every paragraph, with one exception, is in capitals. These peculiarities I have observed in the reproduction. The first edition was in folio. With the exception of the size, the use of similar type, and the ornament on two pages, I have done all I could to enable any one to enter, in imagination,

the shop of Millan, in Shug Lane, and call for a copy of 'the first capital work in which natural description was professedly the principal object.'

Some critics, whilst readily granting to Thomson the title of 'Poet of Nature,' yet deprive him of its full value, by objecting that he does not, in his descriptive poetry, deal with familiar and homely subjects. Much of his descriptive poetry is necessarily of a sublime order, because he includes within his 'Seasons' the works of God and Nature in every clime. I think however, on the whole, and particularly in those portions of 'The Seasons' which he wrote soon after leaving Scotland, he treats of familiar things, as fully and with as much ease and sweetness, as any Poet who has taken 'Nature' for his text. As some persons may make their acquaintance with Thomson, in reading the first edition of 'Winter,' I will, to answer in part the above objection, and to show such persons what beauties they may expect in reading the subsequent editions, and the other 'Seasons,' set forth the lines descriptive of the Annual Visit of the Red-Breast. They first appeared in the second edition of 'Winter,' published in June, 1726. They will serve also to elucidate the statement I have made that the edition of 1738 is only a reprint, and contains nothing in addition to what Thomson had written up to the year 1730. The lines begin after the words 'That Providence allows,' line 235, first edition:

> "The Red-Breast, sole,
> Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
> In joyless fields, and thorny thickets, leaves
> His shivering fellows, and to trusted Man
> His annual visit pays: New to the Dome,
> Against the window beats; then, brisk, alights
> On the warm Hearth, and, hopping o'er the floor,
> Eyes all the smiling Family, askance,
> And pecks and starts and wonders where he is:
> Till, more familiar grown, the Table-crumbs
> Attract his slender feet."

THE GRANGE,
SCARNING,
August, 1900.

WINTER.

A

POEM.

By *JAMES THOMSON*, A.M.

———————————————*Rapidus Sol*
Nondum Hyemem contingit Equis. Jam præterit æstas.
VIRG.

———*Glacialis* HYEMS *canos hirsuta Capillos.*
OVID.

LONDON:

Printed for J. MILLAN, at *Locke's-Head*, in *Shug-Lane*, near the Upper End of the *Hay-Market;* and Sold by J. ROBERTS, in *Warwick-Lane*, and N. BLANDFORD, at the *London-Gazette*, *Charing-Cross*. MDCCXXVI.

(Price One Shilling.)

ERRATA.

Page 38. Line 12, for "*black*" read "*bleak.*"

Page 38. Line 17, for "*Rist*" read "*Rift.*"

Page 41. Line 17, for "*inspring*" read "*inspiring.*"

Page 44. Line 20, for "*ito*" read "*into.*"

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR SPENCER COMPTON.

SIR,

The Author of the following Poem begs Leave to inscribe this his first Performance to your Name, and Patronage. Unknown Himself, and only introduced by the *Muse*, He yet ventures to approach You, with a modest Chearfulness: For, whoever attempts to excel in any Generous Art, tho' he comes alone, and unregarded by the World, may hope for your Notice, and Esteem. Happy! if I can, in any Degree, merit this Good Fortune: as every Ornament, and Grace, of Polite Learning is yours, your single Approbation will be my Fame.

I DARE not indulge my Heart, by dwelling on your *Public* Character; on that exalted Honour, and Integrity which distinguish You, in that *August Assembly*, where you preside; that unshaken Loyalty to Your *Sovereign*, that disinterested Concern for his *People*, which shine out, united, in all your Behaviour, and finish the *Patriot*. I am conscious of my Want of Strength, and Skill for so delicate an Undertaking: And yet, as the Shepherd, in his Cottage, may feel and acknowledge the Influence of the Sun with as lively a Gratitude, as the Great Man, in his Palace, *even I* may be allowed to publish *my Sense* of those Blessings, which, from so many powerful Vertues, are derived to the Nation they adorn.

I conclude with saying, that your fine Discernment and Humanity, in your *Private* Capacity, are so conspicuous, that, if this Address is not received with some Indulgence, it will be a severe Conviction, that what I have written has not the least Share of Merit.

I am,
With the Profoundest Respect,
SIR,
Your most devoted,
and most faithful,
Humble Servant,
JAMES THOMSON.

WINTER.

A

POEM.

SEE! WINTER comes, to rule the varied Year,
Sullen, and sad; with all his rising Train,
Vapours, and *Clouds*, and *Storms*: Be these my Theme,
These, that exalt the Soul to solemn Thought,
And heavenly musing. Welcome kindred Glooms!
Wish'd, wint'ry, Horrors, hail!—With frequent Foot,
Pleas'd, have I, in my cheerful Morn of Life,
When, nurs'd by careless *Solitude*, I liv'd,
And sung of Nature with unceasing Joy,
Pleas'd, have I wander'd thro' your rough Domains;
Trod the pure, virgin, Snows, myself as pure:
Heard the Winds roar, and the big Torrent burst:
Or seen the deep, fermenting, Tempest brew'd,
In the red, evening, Sky.—Thus pass'd the Time,
Till, thro' the opening Chambers of the South,
Look'd out the joyous *Spring*, look'd out, and smil'd.

THEE too, Inspirer of the toiling Swain!
Fair AUTUMN, yellow rob'd! I'll sing of thee,
Of thy last, temper'd, Days, and sunny Calms;
When all the golden *Hours* are on the Wing,

Attending thy Retreat, and round thy Wain,
Slow-rolling, onward to the Southern Sky.

BEHOLD! the well-pois'd *Hornet*, hovering, hangs,
With quivering Pinions, in the genial Blaze;
Flys off, in airy Circles: then returns,
And hums, and dances to the beating Ray.
Nor shall the Man, that, musing, walks alone,
And, heedless, strays within his radiant Lists,
Go unchastis'd away · · · · Sometimes, a Fleece
Of Clouds, wide-scattering, with a lucid Veil,
Soft, shadow o'er th' unruffled Face of Heaven;
And, thro' their dewy Sluices, shed the Sun,
With temper'd Influence down. Then is the Time,
For those, whom *Wisdom*, and whom *Nature* charm,
To steal themselves from the degenerate Croud,
And soar above this *little* Scene of Things:
To tread low-thoughted *Vice* beneath their Feet:
To lay their Passions in a gentle Calm,
And woo lone *Quiet*, in her silent *Walks*.

NOW, solitary, and in pensive Guise,
Oft, let me wander o'er the russet Mead,
Or thro' the pining Grove; where scarce is heard
One dying Strain, to chear the *Woodman's* Toil:
Sad *Philomel*, perchance, pours forth her Plaint,
Far, thro' the withering Copse. Mean while, the Leaves,
That, late, the Forest clad with lively Green,
Nipt by the drizzly Night, and Sallow-hu'd,
Fall, wavering, thro' the Air; or shower amain,
Urg'd by the Breeze, that sobs amid the Boughs.
Then listening *Hares* forsake the rusling Woods,
And, starting at the frequent Noise, escape
To the rough Stubble, and the rushy Fen.
Then *Woodcocks*, o'er the fluctuating Main,

That glimmers to the Glimpses of the Moon,
Stretch their long Voyage to the woodland Glade:
Where, wheeling with uncertain Flight, they mock
The nimble *Fowler's* Aim.—Now *Nature* droops;
Languish the living Herbs, with pale Decay:
And all the *various Family* of Flowers
Their sunny Robes resign. The falling Fruits,
Thro' the still Night, forsake the Parent-Bough,
That, in the first, grey, Glances of the Dawn,
Looks wild, and wonders at the wintry Waste.

THE *Year*, yet pleasing, but declining fast,
Soft, o'er the secret Soul, in gentle Gales,
A Philosophic Melancholly breathes,
And bears the swelling Thought aloft to Heaven.
Then forming *Fancy* rouses to conceive,
What never mingled with the Vulgar's Dream:
Then wake the tender *Pang*, the pitying *Tear*,
The *Sigh* for suffering Worth, the *Wish* prefer'd
For Humankind, the *Joy* to see them bless'd,
And all the *Social Off-spring* of the Heart!

OH! bear me then to high, embowering, Shades;
To twilight Groves, and visionary Vales;
To weeping Grottos, and to hoary Caves;
Where Angel-Forms are seen, and Voices heard,
Sigh'd in low Whispers, that abstract the Soul,
From outward Sense, far into Worlds remote.

Now, when the Western Sun withdraws the Day,
And humid *Evening*, gliding o'er the Sky,
In her chill Progress, checks the straggling Beams,
And robs them of their gather'd, vapoury, Prey,
Where Marshes stagnate, and where Rivers wind,

Cluster the rolling *Fogs*, and swim along
The dusky-mantled Lawn: then slow descend,
Once more to mingle with their *Watry Friends*.

THE vivid Stars shine out, in radiant Files;
And boundless *Ether* glows, till the fair Moon
Shows her broad Visage, in the crimson'd East;
Now, stooping, seems to kiss the passing Cloud:
Now, o'er the pure *Cerulean*, rides sublime.
Wide the pale Deluge floats, with silver Waves,
O'er the sky'd Mountain, to the low-laid Vale;
From the white Rocks, with dim Reflexion, gleams,
And faintly glitters thro' the waving Shades.

ALL Night, abundant Dews, unnoted, fall,
And, at Return of Morning, silver o'er
The Face of Mother-Earth; from every Branch
Depending, tremble the translucent Gems,
And, quivering, seem to fall away, yet cling,
And sparkle in the Sun, whose rising Eye,
With Fogs bedim'd, portends a beauteous Day.

NOW, giddy Youth, whom headlong Passions fire,
Rouse the wild Game, and stain the guiltless Grove,
With Violence, and Death; yet call it Sport,
To scatter Ruin thro' the Realms of *Love*,
And *Peace*, that thinks no ill: But These, the *Muse*,
Whose Charity, unlimited, extends
As wide as *Nature* works, disdains to sing,
Returning to her nobler Theme in view—

FOR see! where *Winter* comes, himself, confest,
Striding the gloomy Blast. First Rains obscure
Drive thro' the mingling Skies, with Tempest foul;
Beat on the Mountain's Brow, and shake the Woods,
That, sounding, wave below. The dreary Plain

Lies overwhelm'd, and lost. The bellying Clouds
Combine, and deepening into Night, shut up
The Day's fair Face. The Wanderers of Heaven,
Each to his Home, retire; save those that love
To take their Pastime in the troubled Air,
And, skimming, flutter round the dimply Flood.
The Cattle, from th' untasted Fields, return,
And ask, with Meaning low, their wonted Stalls;
Or ruminate in the contiguous Shade:
Thither, the houshold, feathery, People croud,
The crested Cock, with all his female Train,
Pensive and wet. Mean while, the Cottage-Swain
Hangs o'er th' enlivening Blaze, and, taleful, there,
Recounts his simple Frolic: Much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the Storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble Roof.

AT last, the muddy Deluge pours along,
Resistless, roaring; dreadful down it comes
From the chapt Mountain, and the mossy Wild,
Tumbling thro' Rocks abrupt, and sounding far:
Then o'er the sanded Valley, floating, spreads,
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again constrain'd,
Betwixt two meeting Hills, it bursts a Way,
Where Rocks, and Woods o'er hang the turbid Stream.
There gathering triple Force, rapid, and deep,
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders thro'.

NATURE! great Parent! whose directing Hand
Rolls round the Seasons of the changeful Year,
How mighty! how majestick are thy Works!
With what a pleasing Dread they swell the Soul,
That sees, astonish'd! and, astonish'd sings!
You too, ye *Winds!* that now begin to blow,

With boisterous Sweep, I raise my Voice to you.
Where are your Stores, ye viewless *Beings!* say?
Where your aerial Magazines reserv'd,
Against the Day of Tempest perilous?
In what untravel'd Country of the Air,
Hush'd in still Silence, sleep you, when 'tis calm?

LATE, in the louring Sky, red, fiery, Streaks
Begin to flush about; the reeling Clouds
Stagger with dizzy Aim, as doubting yet
Which Master to obey: while rising, slow,
Sad, in the Leaden-colour'd East, the Moon
Wears a black Circle round her sully'd Orb.
Then issues forth the Storm, with loud Control,
And the thin Fabrick of the pillar'd Air
O'erturns, at once. Prone, on th' uncertain Main,
Descends th' Etherial Force, and plows its Waves,
With dreadful Rist: from the mid-Deep, appears,
Surge after Surge, the rising, wat'ry, War.
Whitening, the angry Billows rowl immense,
And roar their Terrors, through the shuddering Soul
Of feeble Man, amidst their Fury caught,
And, dash'd upon his Fate: Then, o'er the Cliff,
Where dwells the *Sea-Mew*, unconfin'd, they fly,
And, hurrying, swallow up the steril Shore.

THE Mountain growls; and all its sturdy *Sons*
Stoop to the Bottom of the Rocks they shade:
Lone, on its Midnight-Side, and all aghast,
The dark, way-faring, *Stranger*, breathless, toils,
And climbs against the Blast—
Low, waves the rooted Forest, vex'd, and sheds
What of its leafy Honours yet remains.
Thus, struggling thro' the dissipated Grove,
The whirling Tempest raves along the Plain;

And, on the cottage thacht, or lordly Dome,
Keen-fastening, shakes 'em to the solid Base.
Sleep, frighted, flies; the hollow Chimney howls,
The Windows rattle, and the Hinges creak.

THEN, too, they say, thro' all the burthen'd Air,
Long Groans are heard, shrill Sounds, and distant Sighs,
That, murmur'd by the *Demon* of the Night,
Warn the devoted *Wretch* of Woe, and Death!
Wild Uproar lords it wide: the Clouds commixt,
With Stars, swift-gliding, sweep along the Sky.
All Nature reels.—But hark! The *Almighty* speaks:
Instant, the chidden Storm begins to pant,
And dies, at once, into a noiseless Calm.

As yet, 'tis Midnight's Reign; the weary Clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid Gloom:
Now, while the drousy World lies lost in Sleep,
Let me associate with the low-brow'd *Night*,
And *Contemplation*, her sedate Compeer;
Let me shake off th' intrusive Cares of Day,
And lay the medling Senses all aside.

AND now, ye lying *Vanities* of Life!
You ever-tempting, ever-cheating Train!
Where are you now? and what is your Amount?
Vexation, Disappointment, and Remorse.
Sad, sickening, Thought! and yet, deluded Man,
A Scene of wild, disjointed, Visions past,
And broken Slumbers, rises, still resolv'd,
With new-flush'd Hopes, to run your giddy Round.

FATHER of Light, and Life! thou *Good Supreme!*
O! teach me what is Good! teach me thy self!
Save me from Folly, Vanity and Vice,
From every low Pursuit! and feed my Soul,

With Knowledge, conscious Peace, and Vertue pure,
Sacred, substantial, never-fading Bliss!

Lo! from the livid East, or piercing North,
Thick Clouds ascend, in whose capacious Womb,
A vapoury Deluge lies, to Snow congeal'd:
Heavy, they roll their fleecy World along;
And the Sky saddens with th' impending Storm.
Thro' the hush'd Air, the whitening Shower descends,
At first, thin-wavering; till, at last, the Flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the Day,
With a continual Flow. See! sudden, hoar'd,
The Woods beneath the stainless Burden bow,
Blackning, along the mazy Stream it melts;
Earth's universal Face, deep-hid, and chill,
Is all one, dazzling, Waste. The LABOURER-OX
Stands cover'd o'er with Snow, and then demands
The Fruit of all his Toil. The Fowls of Heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel Season, croud around
The winnowing Store, and claim the little Boon,
That *Providence* allows. The foodless Wilds
Pour forth their brown *Inhabitants;* the Hare,
Tho' timorous of Heart, and hard beset
By Death, in various Forms, dark Snares, and Dogs,
And more unpitying Men, the Garden seeks,
Urg'd on by *fearless* Want. The bleating Kind
Eye the bleak Heavens, and next, the glistening Earth,
With Looks of dumb Despair; then sad, dispers'd,
Dig, for the wither'd Herb, thro' Heaps of Snow.

Now, *Shepherds*, to your helpless Charge be kind;
Baffle the raging Year, and fill their Penns
With Food, at will: lodge them below the Blast,
And watch them strict; for from the bellowing East,
In this dire Season, oft the Whirlwind's Wing

Sweeps up the Burthen of whole wintry Plains,
In one fierce Blast, and o'er th' unhappy Flocks,
Lodged in the Hollow of two neighbouring Hills,
The billowy Tempest whelms; till, upwards urg'd,
The Valley to a shining Mountain swells,
That curls its Wreaths amid the freezing Sky.

Now, all amid the Rigours of the Year,
In the wild Depth of Winter, while without
The ceaseless Winds blow keen, be my Retreat
A rural, shelter'd, solitary, Scene;
Where ruddy Fire, and beaming Tapers join
To chase the chearless Gloom: there let me sit,
And hold high Converse with the mighty Dead,
Sages of ancient Time, as God's rever'd,
As Gods beneficent, who blest Mankind,
With Arts, and Arms, and humaniz'd a World.
Rous'd at th' inspring Thought—I throw aside
The long-liv'd Volume, and, deep-musing, hail
The sacred *Shades*, that, slowly-rising, pass
Before my wondering Eyes—First, *Socrates*,
Truth's early Champion, Martyr for his God:
Solon, the next, who built his Commonweal,
On Equity's firm Base: *Lycurgus*, then,
Severely good, and him of rugged *Rome*,
Numa, who soften'd *her* rapacious *Sons*.
Cimon, sweet-soul'd, and *Aristides* just.
Unconquer'd *Cato*, virtuous in Extreme;
With that attemper'd *Heroe, mild, and firm,
Who wept the Brother, while the Tyrant bled.
Scipio, the humane Warriour, gently brave,
Fair Learning's Friend; who early sought the Shade,
To dwell, with *Innocence*, and *Truth*, retir'd.
And, equal to the best, the *Theban*, *He*

**Timoleon.*

Who, *single*, rais'd his Country into Fame.
Thousands behind, the Boast of *Greece* and *Rome*,
Whom *Vertue* owns, the Tribute of a Verse
Demand, but who can count the Stars of Heaven?
Who sing their Influence on this lower World?
But see who yonder comes! nor comes alone,
With *sober* State, and of *majestic* Mien,
The Sister Muses in his Train—'Tis He!
Maro! the best of Poets, and of Men!
Great *Homer* too appears, of *daring* Wing!
Parent of Song! and *equal*, by his Side,
The *British Muse*, join'd Hand in Hand, they walk,
Darkling, nor miss their Way to Fame's Ascent.

Society divine! Immortal Minds!
Still visit thus my Nights, for *you* reserv'd,
And mount my soaring Soul to Deeds like yours.
Silence! thou lonely *Power!* the Door be thine:
See, on the hallow'd Hour, that none intrude,
Save *Lycidas*, the Friend, with Sense refin'd,
Learning digested well, exalted Faith,
Unstudy'd Wit, and Humour ever gay.

CLEAR Frost succeeds, and thro' the blew Serene,
For Sight too fine, th' Ætherial Nitre flies,
To bake the Glebe, and bind the slip'ry Flood.
This of the wintry Season is the Prime;
Pure are the Days, and lustrous are the Nights,
Brighten'd with starry Worlds, till then unseen.
Mean while, the Orient, darkly red, breathes forth
An Icy Gale, that, in its mid Career,
Arrests the bickering Stream. The nightly Sky,
And all her glowing Constellations pour
Their rigid Influence down: It freezes on
Till Morn, late-rising, o'er the drooping World,

Lifts her pale Eye, unjoyous: then appears
The various Labour of the silent Night,
The pendant Isicle, the Frost-Work fair,
Where thousand Figures rise, the crusted Snow,
Tho' white, made whiter, by the fining North.
On blithsome Frolic bent, the youthful Swains,
While every Work of Man is laid at Rest,
Rush o'er the watry Plains, and, shuddering, view
The fearful Deeps below: or with the Gun,
And faithful Spaniel, range the ravag'd Fields,
And, adding to the Ruins of the Year,
Distress the Feathery, or the Footed *Game.*

But hark! the nightly Winds, with hollow Voice,
Blow, blustering, from the South—the Frost subdu'd,
Gradual, resolves into a weeping Thaw.
Spotted, the Mountains shine: loose Sleet descends,
And floods the Country round: the Rivers swell,
Impatient for the Day · · · Those sullen Seas,
That wash th' ungenial Pole, will rest no more,
Beneath the Shackles of the mighty North;
But, rousing all their Waves, resistless heave,—
And hark!—the length'ning Roar, continuous, runs
Athwart the rifted Main; at once, it bursts,
And piles a thousand Mountains to the Clouds!
Ill fares the Bark, the Wretches' last Resort,
That, lost amid the floating Fragments, moors
Beneath the Shelter of an Icy Isle;
While Night o'erwhelms the Sea, and Horror looks
More horrible. Can human Hearts endure
Th' assembled *Mischiefs*, that besiege them round:
Unlistening *Hunger*, fainting *Weariness*,
The *Roar* of Winds, and Waves, the *Crush* of Ice,
Now, ceasing, now, renew'd, with louder Rage,
And bellowing round the Main: Nations remote,

Shook from their Midnight-Slumbers, deem they hear
Portentous Thunder, in the troubled Sky.
More to embroil the Deep, Leviathan,
And his unwieldy Train, in horrid Sport,
Tempest the loosen'd Brine; while, thro' the Gloom,
Far, from the dire, unhospitable Shore,
The Lyon's Rage, the Wolf's sad Howl is heard,
And all the fell Society of Night.
Yet, *Providence*, that ever-waking *Eye*
Looks down, with Pity, on the fruitless Toil
Of Mortals, lost to Hope, and *lights* them safe,
Thro' all this dreary Labyrinth of Fate.

'Tis done!—Dread Winter has subdued the Year,
And reigns, tremendous, o'er the desart Plains!
How dead the Vegetable Kingdom lies!
How dumb the Tuneful! *Horror* wide extends
His solitary Empire.—Now, fond *Man!*
Behold thy pictur'd life: Pass some few Years,
Thy flow'ring Spring, Thy short-liv'd Summer's Strength,
Thy sober Autumn, fading into Age,
And pale, concluding, Winter shuts thy Scene,
And shrouds *Thee* in the Grave—where now, are fled
Those Dreams of Greatness? those unsolid Hopes
Of Happiness? those Longings after Fame?
Those restless Cares? those busy, bustling Days?
Those Nights of secret Guilt? those veering Thoughts,
Flutt'ring 'twixt Good, and Ill, that shar'd thy Life?
All, now, are vanish'd! *Vertue*, sole, survives,
Immortal, Mankind's never-failing Friend,
His Guide to Happiness on high—and see!
'Tis come, the Glorious *Morn!* the second Birth
Of Heaven, and Earth!—awakening *Nature* hears
Th' Almighty Trumpet's Voice, and starts to Life,

Renew'd, unfading. Now, th' Eternal *Scheme*,
That Dark Perplexity, that Mystic Maze,
Which Sight cou'd never trace, nor Heart conceive,
To *Reason's* Eye, refin'd, clears up apace.
Angels, and Men, astonish'd, pause—and dread
To travel thro' the Depths of Providence,
Untry'd, unbounded. Ye vain *Learned!* see,
And, prostrate in the Dust, adore that *Power*,
And *Goodness*, oft arraign'd. See now the Cause,
Why conscious *Worth*, oppress'd, in secret long
Mourn'd, unregarded: Why the *Good Man's* Share
In Life, was Gall, and Bitterness of Soul:
Why the lone *Widow* and her *Orphans*, pin'd,
In starving Solitude; while *Luxury*,
In Palaces, lay prompting her low Thought,
To form unreal Wants: why Heaven-born *Faith*,
And *Charity*, prime Grace! wore the *red* Marks
Of *Persecution's* Scourge: Why licens'd *Pain*,
That cruel *Spoiler*, that embosom'd *Foe*,
Imbitter'd all our Bliss. Ye Good *Distrest!*
Ye Noble *Few!* that, here, unbending, stand
Beneath Life's Pressures · · · yet a little while,
And all your Woes are past. *Time* swiftly fleets,
And wish'd *Eternity*, approaching, brings
Life undecaying, Love without Allay,
Pure flowing Joy, and Happiness sincere.

THE END.

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